

CENTENARY

AMERICAN METHODISM.

1784-1884.

Preparation for the Celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of
the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in
America, at Baltimore, Md., December, 1884.

NASHVILLE, TENN.:
SOUTHERN METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE.
1883.

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Centenary of American Methodism.

THE history of the movement for the Centennial Celebration of American Methodism will be briefly given:

In the General Conference which assembled in Atlanta, Ga., on the 1st day of May, 1878, the following action was taken on May 17:

“Thomas O. Summers and A. G. Haygood offered resolutions concerning the Centennial Celebration of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, which were read and referred to the Committee on the Ecumenical Conference.”

The next day (May 18, 1878) the Committee on the Ecumenical Conference made the following report:

“The committee to whom was referred the resolutions of Thomas O. Summers and A. G. Haygood respecting the celebration of the Centenary of American Methodism in 1884, having duly considered the same, beg leave to report, in their judgment, the subject is one of importance to all the families of Methodism on this continent, and that it is desirable that whatever step may be taken by our Church in the matter shall be taken at this session of the General Conference.

“The preamble and resolutions being an unexceptionable expression of what should be the feeling and action of the Conference, we return them with the recommendation that they be adopted.

“Respectfully submitted.

“PAUL WHITEHEAD, A. G. STITT,

“N. H. D. WILSON, R. ALEXANDER,

“Committee.

“Whereas the year 1884 will be the Centenary of American Methodism—the Methodist Episcopal Church in America having been organized in the city of Baltimore, December, 1784; and whereas that event ought to be commemorated by all the Methodists on this continent; therefore,

Resolved, That the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, now assembled in Atlanta, Ga., deem it desirable that a Conference of Methodists in the United States, the Dominion of Canada, and other parts of the Continent of America, be held in the city of Baltimore, at Christmas, in the year 1884, that being the centenary of the organization of the Methodist Church in America.

Resolved, That the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, be requested, in behalf of this Conference, to open a correspondence on this subject with the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Presidents of the several Canada Conferences, and of all other Methodist bodies on this continent.

Resolved, That the Bishops and Presidents aforesaid be, and the same are hereby, requested to mature a programme for the solemn observance of the centenary of the organization of American Methodism, in the city of Baltimore, Md., December 25, 1884.

“THOMAS O. SUMMERS,
“A. G. HAYGOOD.”

The report was adopted.

The General Conference met in Nashville, Tenn., on May 3, 1882. In the Address of the Bishops to the Conference the following allusion was made to the Centennial Celebration:

“Before another session of this body, the first hundred years since Methodism in America was formally organized will be completed. Its proper celebration would be a means of grace. The last General Conference took tentative action on this subject, but it remains for you to act more definitely. It might be well for this body not only to take advanced steps for concerted action in this direction with our brethren of other Churches, but to designate the objects upon which the liberality of the people may be directed, on that centenary occasion, in their thank-offerings. The centenary of the organization of American Methodism is an event too rich in suggestion, and too important in its bearings on the religion and civilization of our land, to pass without suitable celebration.”

In accordance with a resolution of the Conference, the Bishops appointed the following—

Committee on Centenary of American Methodism: E. R. Hendrix, J. S. Key, J. C. Granbery, E. B. Prettyman, R. W. Jones.

On the 11th of May this committee made their report, which was read and laid on the table. On the 24th of May the report was taken up and adopted.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CENTENARY OF METHODISM.

“Your committee to whom was referred that part of the Bishops’ Address respecting the Centenary of American Methodism, and also a paper from leading ministers and laymen of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the joint celebration of that event in the city of Baltimore, in December, 1884, after carefully considering the same, submit the following report:

“The religious movement called Methodism, which by the middle of the eighteenth century had spread over England, soon followed English-speaking people to the remote colonies, and by 1766 was introduced into America by the zeal of Barbara Heck and the faithful preaching of Philip Embury and Captain Webb. Three years later the movement had taken so kindly to American soil that in response to Mr. Wesley’s call at the British Conference, ‘Who will go to the help of our brethren in America?’ Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor offered their services, and were promptly aided in coming by the liberality of their brethren in the Conference. A few years later Mr. Wesley himself was urged to come, but, unable to do so, he sent Francis Asbury, a man the most like Wesley in executive power, untiring labors, and ‘consuming zeal, ever given to the Church. Appointed superintendent in 1772, he soon introduced the plans of work which had been successfully tested in England, and put the impress of his organizing mind on the infant societies. In the absence of ordained preachers, the people were dependent on the English clergy for the sacraments. The Revolutionary War causing the return of most of these, it was necessary to organize the ‘few sheep in the wilderness’ into a Church

of their own, where not only the word of God might be preached, but the sacraments duly administered. Of the eighty-three traveling preachers in the New World, sixty were assembled at the memorable Christmas Conference in the city of Baltimore, in December, 1784, to welcome Thomas Coke, LL.D., recently set apart and ordained by Mr. Wesley to the office of superintendent, or bishop, of the Methodist societies in America. He and Francis Asbury were chosen to this high office by the voice of the Conference, and twelve faithful men were elected and ordained elders. At this time, with the adoption of our Articles of Religion and the general system of discipline which has since governed us, the scattered societies became a fully organized Church. We thus antedated by some five years the organization of the constitutional Government of the country, and in 1789 the Methodist Episcopal Church, through their bishops, presented a congratulatory address to President Washington, on his assuming the duties of his office.

“Thus, in the providence of God, Methodism took an organic shape in a land peculiarly favorable to its growth, until within less than a hundred years our eighty-three traveling preachers have become more than twenty-seven thousand, and her few hundred members over four million. This numerical showing is in keeping with her moral and religious influence in the New World. What with the extent and character of her periodical literature, her institutions crowded by the youth of the land, the thousands annually converted at her altars, and the countless multitudes who attend upon her service, Methodism is an incalculable power in the land of her adoption. Her responsibility to God and man is augmented in like proportion. At the General Conference of 1878 action was first taken looking to ‘a Conference of Methodists in the United States and Canada, and other parts of the Continent of America, to be held in the city of Baltimore, at Christmas, in 1884,’ and the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were ‘requested, in behalf of the Conference, to open a correspondence on this subject with the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Presidents of

the several Canada Conferences, and of all other Methodist bodies on this continent.' In view of the action already taken, we submit the following resolutions:

"1. *Resolved*, That in grateful acknowledgment of God's signal mercies and of our increased prosperity and responsibility, we will endeavor, during the year 1884, to raise the sum of two million dollars, to be applied equally to the cause of Education, Church Extension, and Foreign Missions, save where donors shall give special direction to their gifts, under the supervision of a committee hereinafter named.

"2. That a committee consisting of twelve ministers and twelve laymen, to be appointed by the Bishops, shall, together with the Bishops, be charged with the duty of collecting and administering all funds collected for Connectional objects, and that such committee make its report to the General Conference in 1886.

"3. That such a committee be authorized to organize sub-committees in every Annual Conference, who, jointly with these, may aid in collecting funds for both local and Connectional objects, and who shall report to the Central Committee as above constituted all amounts raised for the payment of Church debts, the erection of churches and parsonages, and all other local objects or needs as for Connectional objects.

"4. That the committee above provided for shall represent us in all correspondence respecting the Conference to be held in Baltimore in December, 1884, and that our Bishops be, and are hereby, authorized to appoint all necessary representatives from our Church to such Conference.

"Respectfully submitted.

"E. R. HENDRIX, J. S. KEY,

"J. C. GRANBERRY, E. B. PRETTYMAN,

"R. W. JONES."

By authority of the foregoing action of the General Conference, the Bishops appointed the following committee of twenty-four, twelve ministers and twelve laymen:

Ministers--E. R. Hendrix, C. B. Riddick, H. P. Walker, Samuel Rodgers, Samuel K. Cox, N. H. D. Wilson, J. H. Mc-

Lean, A. G. Haygood, O. P. Fitzgerald, J. H. Dye, J. B. McFerrin, C. B. Galloway.

Laymen—David Clopton, A. R. Boone, James L. Buchanan, George M. Bain, Frank Goad, Richard M. Seruggs, George W. Williams, W H. Foster, George D. Shands, J. W. Tucker, W C. Ireland, P. Meguiar.

A meeting of this committee was appointed to be held in Nashville, Tenn., on the 4th day of May, 1883.

MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CENTENARY OF
AMERICAN METHODISM.

“The committee convened in the Bishops’ Room at the Publishing House, in Nashville, May 4, according to appointment, holding a session of two days.

“Members present—Ministers: All the Bishops, E. R. Hendrix, H. P. Walker, Samuel Rodgers, Samuel K. Cox, N. H. D. Wilson, J. B. McFerrin, J H. McLean, A. G. Haygood, C. B. Galloway, O. P. Fitzgerald. Laymen: G. D. Shands, W. C. Ireland, P. Meguiar.

“The Rev. Dr. E. R. Hendrix, temporary chairman, convened the committee. Prayer was offered by Bishop Pierce.

“The Rev. Dr. E. R. Hendrix was, on motion, made permanent chairman of the committee.

“The Rev. Dr. O. P. Fitzgerald was, on motion, made permanent secretary.

“Dr. Hendrix, in taking the chair, made brief and appropriate remarks.

“A communication was received from H. K. Carroll, Secretary of the Centenary Committee of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which was read and filed.

“The Rev. David Morton, Secretary of the Board of Church Extension, by invitation, addressed the Board in relation to the operations of that Board in connection with the Centennial Celebration.

“The following resolutions, embodying a proposed plan of Centenary observance, were adopted:

“1. *Resolved*, That the leading object of this Centenary observance is the spiritual improvement of our people by reviewing God’s signal mercies during the hundred years of

our organic life, and by calling out in suitable monumental form our gratitude for these blessings.

““2. That the first Sabbath in January, 1884, be observed throughout the Church as a day of devout prayer for the divine blessing upon the Centenary services of the year, and for a general revival of religion, and that on that day our preachers explain the nature and objects of the Centenary Celebration, and especially urge adherence to those doctrines and usages of early Methodism that have contributed under God to her spiritual power.

““3. That each Annual Conference provide for the preaching of a Centenary sermon before its own body, and that a committee of ministers and laymen in each Conference be appointed by the Central Centenary Committee to arrange for appropriate Centennial services at such points in the Conferences as may be deemed best.

““4. That the last Sabbaths in May and October, 1884, as each Annual Conference may designate, be observed as days of special Centenary service in all our churches and mission stations, and that the Central Centenary Committee be requested to prepare a programme of exercises therefor.

““5. That due attention be paid to a children’s celebration of our Methodist Centenary, to be held at such time in 1884 as each Annual Conference may determine.

““6. That a sub-committee of five be appointed to coöperate with like committees of other Methodist bodies in arranging for a joint celebration of the Centenary of the Christmas Conference held in Baltimore in 1784.

““7. That a Central Centenary Committee, composed of three ministers and three laymen, be appointed by the General Centenary Committee, whose duty it shall be to correspond with the Annual Conference Centenary Committees; to prepare and publish all necessary documents; and to secure the intelligent and hearty coöperation of the whole Church, particularly in the matter of collections for Connectional objects.

““8. That special attention be given to raising funds for educational purposes. That the Centenary Committee of

each Annual Conference, the Central Committee concurring, may designate the institution or institutions for whose benefit contributions are made, provided that all donors may give directions to their contributions; and that all funds contributed for educational purposes, and not otherwise directed, shall be forwarded to the Central Committee, to constitute "A Centenary Educational Fund," whose administration shall be determined by the next General Conference.

"9. That the cause of Church extension be strongly urged upon the attention of our people as a leading object for their contributions in 1884, and that we seek to raise a Loan Fund of \$500,000.

"10. That the Anglo-Chinese University at Shanghai, the mission-house and church-edifice in the City of Mexico, the mission-school at Rio de Janeiro, be recommended as special objects for Centenary contributions in our mission-fields.

"11. That the Executive Committee, provided for in Article 7, be constituted a temporary Board of Trust, who shall take charge of, and administer, all funds coming into the hands of this committee, until the creation of a permanent Board of Trust, except funds for missionary and Church extension purposes, which latter they shall receive and pass over to their appropriate Boards.

"12. That Bishop McTyeire be requested to prepare a suitable Centennial volume, setting forth the salient points in the history of our American Methodism during the first hundred years of its organic existence."

"On motion, the Chairman appointed the following committee to nominate a Central Centenary Committee, as provided for in the seventh resolution: Bishops Hargrove and Wilson, and P. Meguiar.

"The committee reported the following names, which were adopted: E. R. Hendrix, D.D., Chairman; W. P. Harrison, D.D., Secretary; James Whitworth, Treasurer; Bishop H. N. McTyeire, L. D. Palmer, James G. Carter.

"The following committee was appointed under the sixth resolution: Bishop A. W. Wilson, Chairman; John S. Mar-

tin, D.D., Secretary; Samuel Rodgers, D.D., T. J. Magruder, Charles Shipley.

“A communication from the Rev. J. H. Dye, a clerical member of the committee, explaining the cause of his unavoidable absence, and conveying suggestions for the consideration of the Board, was received.

“Adjourned to meet at the call of the chairman. Benediction by Bishop Wilson.

“E. R. HENDRIX, *Chairman.*

“O. P. FITZGERALD, *Secretary.*”

At a meeting of the Central Centenary Committee, held on the 7th day of May, the following members were present: E. R. Hendrix, Chairman; W P Harrison, Secretary; James Whitworth, Treasurer; H. N. McTyeire, L. D. Palmer.

The committee being, by action of the General Committee, a Board of Trust for the Centenary Fund, took the necessary steps for obtaining an act of incorporation under the laws of the State of Tennessee. The act is as follows:

STATE OF TENNESSEE—CHARTER OF INCORPORATION.

“Be it known that E. R. Hendrix, W P. Harrison, James G. Carter, H. N. McTyeire, L. D. Palmer, and James Whitworth, are hereby constituted a body politic and corporate, by the name and style of the ‘Centenary Board of Trust of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.’ The object of said corporation is to promote the cause of education; to receive, hold, and administer all property donated, devised, or bequeathed to it for educational or other benevolent purposes; to apply, use, and expend such money or other property acquired by it at whatever point and in whatever manner may seem to the officers and directors of said corporation best calculated to promote its interests.

“The general powers of said corporation shall be to sue and be sued by the corporate name; to have and use a common seal, which it may alter at pleasure; if no common seal, then the signature of the name of the corporation, by any duly authorized officer, shall be legal and binding; to purchase and hold, or receive by gift, bequest, or devise, in addition to the personal property owned by the corporation, real estate neces-

sary for the transaction of the corporate business, and also to purchase or accept any real estate in payment or in part payment of any debt due the corporation, and sell the same; to establish by-laws and make all rules and regulations, not inconsistent with the laws and constitution, deemed expedient for the management of corporate affairs; and to appoint such subordinate officers and agents, in addition to President, Secretary, and Treasurer, as the business of the corporation may require, designate the name of the office, and fix the compensation of the officer.

“We, the undersigned, apply to the State of Tennessee, by virtue of the laws of the land, for a charter of incorporation for the purposes and with the powers, etc., declared in the foregoing instrument.

“Witness our hands the 7th day of May, 1883.

“H. N. McTYEIRE, E. R. HENDRIX,
“W. P. HARRISON, L. D. PALMER,
“JAMES WHITWORTH.”

“*State of Tennessee—Davidson County.*

“Personally appeared before me, J. R. McCann, Deputy Clerk of the County Court of said county, the within-named H. N. McTyreire, E. R. Hendrix, W P Harrison, L. D. Palmer, James Whitworth, the bargainers, with whom I am personally acquainted, and who acknowledged that they executed the within instrument for the purposes therein contained.

“Witness my hand, at office, this 15th day of May, 1883.

“J. R. McCANN,
“*Deputy Clerk.*”

“*State of Tennessee—Davidson County.*

“*REGISTER'S OFFICE, May 15, 1883.*

“I, James L. Hogan, Deputy Register of said county, do certify that the foregoing instrument and certificate are registered in said office in Book No. 76, page 372; that they were received May 15, 1883, at 12:30 o'clock, P.M., and were entered in Note-book 8, page 80.

JAMES L. HOGAN,

“*Deputy Register, Davidson County.*”

“I, David A. Nunn, Secretary of State of the State of Tennessee, do certify that the foregoing instrument, with certifi-

cates of acknowledgment of probate and registration, was filed in my office for registration on the 16th day of May, 1883, and recorded on the 16th day of May, 1883, in Corporation Record Book I, in said office, page 131. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my official signature; and, by order of the Governor, affixed the great seal of the State of Tennessee, at the Department, in the city of Nashville, this 16th day of May, A.D. 1883.

“D. A. NUNN,
“Secretary of State.”

“State of Tennessee—Davidson County.

“REGISTER’S OFFICE, May 16, 1883.

“I, James L. Hogan, Deputy Register of said county, do certify that the foregoing certificate is registered in said office in Book No. 76, page 374; that it was received May 16, 1883, at 3:40 o’clock, P.M., and was entered in Note-book 8, page 84.

“JAMES L. HOGAN,
“Deputy Register, Davidson County.”

The Secretary was instructed to notify the presiding elders of the various Annual Conferences that they have been appointed chairmen of the District Centenary Committees, and that these District Committees combined will constitute the Annual Conference Centenary Committee, under the following regulations:

“1. Each presiding elder is *ex officio* chairman of the District Centenary Committee.

“2. The presiding elder shall nominate one minister and one layman in his district, who, with himself as chairman, shall constitute the District Centenary Committee, when the nomination shall have been approved by the Central Committee.

“3. If the presiding elder first appointed should be removed from the district, his successor shall take his place as chairman of the committee.

“4. If the minister appointed as a clerical member of the District Committee be removed, the presiding elder shall nominate, and the Central Committee appoint, a successor.

“5. If a vacancy should occur in the lay membership of the District Committee, it must be filled by nomination of the presiding elder and appointment of the Central Committee.

“6. The District Centenary Committees, when convened at the Annual Conference or elsewhere, shall proceed to organize as the Annual Conference Centenary Committee by the election of the necessary officers.

“7. Presiding elders are earnestly requested to select the most competent men in making their nominations for the District Committees.

“8. The nominations by the presiding elders must be forwarded immediately to the Secretary of the Central Centenary Committee, at Nashville, Tenn.

“E. R. HENDRIX, *Chairman.*

“W. P. HARRISON, *Secretary.*”

To the Presiding Elders.

THE following circular has been mailed to the Presiding Elders in every Conference. In some cases the post-office address was not known to the Secretary. If any Presiding Elder should fail to receive the Circular and the Certificate of Nomination, by forwarding his address to the Secretary, the papers will be sent immediately:

“NASHVILLE, TENN., May, 1883.

“REV.

“*Dear Brother:*—You have been appointed by the Central Centenary Committee of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as Chairman of the District Centenary Committee for your District.

“Please nominate one minister and one layman in your District, and send their names to me as soon as possible. Send the **BEST** nominations that you can make. We want none but men who are willing to coöperate with zeal and energy in this great work. May the great Head of the Church guide you in making the selection, that the cause may prosper in the hands of those to whose care it is committed.

“You will find inclosed an envelope and blank form. Please fill up the blanks, seal, and forward to me.

“Yours fraternally,

W. P. HARRISON,

“Secretary Central Centenary Committee.”

Certificate of Nomination.

THE following certificate has been forwarded to the Presiding Elders. A post-paid envelope is inclosed, and the Elder is requested to fill the blanks with the names of the Conference, District, persons nominated, and his own name at the bottom. Seal the envelope, and forward to the Secretary without loss of time:

..... ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

DISTRICT COMMITTEE.

“I recommend as the minister, and as the layman, from District, Conference, as suitable persons for membership in the District Centenary Committee.

..... P. E.”

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